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THE
HUDSON'S BAY
AND
PACIFIC TERRITORIES.
A LECTURE.

BY ALEXANDER MORRIS, A.M.,
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Montreal:
JOHN LOVELL, PRINTER AND PUBLISHER.
1859.

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P R E F A C E .

PUBLIC attention is now more generally turned than it ever was before, toward the vast portion of the American continent which forms the subject of this Lecture, and there is moreover a general desire to obtain information as to the North-Western and Pacific Territories. The writer, therefore, cherishes the hope that the ensuing Lecture, which was delivered during the last winter before the Mercantile Library Association of Montreal, and afterwards before the Mechanics' Institute of Hemmingford, C. E., will meet a want, and may be found to present, in brief compass, a concise view of the leading features of interest connected with these countries.

A gleaner of other men's labours, he will be well rewarded for the time spent in preparation, if the perusal of the ensuing pages leads any reader to take a deeper interest in the advancement of so large and promising a portion of the British North American Empire, and to feel that we have a country of which we have reason to be proud.

Montreal, 31st March, 1859.

THE HUDSON'S BAY

AND

PACIFIC TERRITORIES.

IN appearing before this intelligent auditory to-night, and claiming their attention for a brief period, I have selected for their consideration a subject of much practical importance,—one too in which the people of Canada have a direct and immediate interest,—and not only so, but one which the friends everywhere of civilization cannot fail to regard with much favour.

In looking back over the past ten years of our Provincial history and its lights and shadows, there is no feature more indicative of our real and substantial progress, than the intelligent development of the national sentiment, which is unmistakably evident. Self-respect and self-reliance in the individual evoke corresponding sentiments in the minds of others. The man who goes steadily onward in the face of oppos-

ing difficulties, in the spirit of sturdy, honest self-reliance, toward the accomplishment of a well-defined and noble purpose, commands the respect of even those who most differ from him. And so with a rising nationality. We must feel and exhibit confidence in ourselves,—we must have a settled purpose before us,—and we must go steadily onward, bringing all our energies to bear upon its accomplishment, in order to merit the confidence and retain the esteem of older nations. Our Northern rising nationality has an ample field before it,—a brilliant future in the distance. To occupy that field,—to attain to that future in all its grandeur,—the people of British North America must take high views of their plain and manifest responsibilities, must evince an adequate appreciation of their duties, and must possess a thorough knowledge of the advantages which they possess, and of the vast resources which Providence has placed at their disposal, in order that they may advance steadily toward that high position among the nations which they may yet attain,—in order that they may enter upon the full fruition of that rich inheritance of civil and religious liberty and of high social and political privileges, which is their birthright as an offshoot of the three united nations who compose the British people.

It is, then, under the influence of such trains of thought and with such objects in view, that I ask you to-night to travel with me up the Ottawa Valley, and over the trail of the enterprising adventurers of the old Canadian North-West Company, and, taking our stand there, judge for ourselves, like the Israelitish spies, of the character of that section of a future great empire, which has for a century past been claimed as the domain of a company of merchants,—the vast preserve which has been so carefully guarded from the encroachments of modern civilization, and which is popularly known as the HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORIES.

Clearer views, more correct and intelligent opinions, as to the character of the vast country in question, are beginning to prevail. The deep, thick veil of obscurity and darkness in which the territories were so closely enwrapped, is beginning to be uplifted. The assaults of civilization have commenced simultaneously from the East and the West.

And in the sudden pre-eminence which these countries have reached, and in the rapid planting of Anglo-Saxon civilization on their virgin soil, the finger of Providence has been evidently at work and is plainly to be distinguished. Who could have dreamt five years ago, that so many influ-

ences would so soon have been at work for the building up of British power on the shores of the Pacific? But looking back over the more recent past, even the materialist cannot fail to be struck with the singular manner in which the discoveries of gold have been, of late years, the precursor of the advances of the mixed races, that, for want of a better name, are popularly known as the Anglo-Saxon race.

Let us thus then, from this point of view, briefly glance at the history of the past. And coming first to our own American shores, we observe Britain planting a colony in America. The colony grows; but at length the ties that bound it to the parent state are ruptured, and a new and vigorous nation, speaking the English language and inheriting its literature and its religion, has taken its stand among the nations. But time passes on. Away upon the Pacific, particles of yellow dross are found. The cry of "Gold! gold!" is raised, and a furious rush of eager, fierce speculation, sweeps over the intervening space, and a thronging horde of energetic Americans occupy the new territory. Another Anglo-Saxon state, California, claims admission into the American Union.

But again, a vast continent lay in comparative

obscurity. Its progress was slow, the distance to it was great, the prospects of its speedy occupation dark and gloomy. But suddenly, it is touched as with a magic wand. Particles of the yellow dross are found. The cupidity of the nations is aroused, and a dense inroad of adventurers takes place. A new wing of the great Anglo-Saxon family is planted; and a new nationality springs into birth, destined to take no mean place in the after-history of the human family, receiving the impress of the British type of mind, and inheriting the British peculiarities of thought and of mental training. There, on Australian soil, has been planted and taken deep root, a vigorous offshoot of the old British oak.

But again time passes on: another great section of the American continent is lying idle, and unoccupied to any extent by civilized life. A great company has it in possession, and seeks to maintain about it a dense veil of obscurity. It has been the home of the roving Indian,—the haunt of the buffalo,—the huge preserve for the gathering of a few peltries. It is designed that so it shall remain, when again the cry is raised of “Gold! gold!” The yellow dross is found on the Fraser and the Thompson Rivers, and again the irresistible rush of the Anglo-Saxon family takes place. Bri-

tish Columbia takes its place among the Colonies of the Empire. A new centre of light, civilization, and liberty has been planted upon the shores of the Pacific.

Surely it is plain to the most superficial observer, that there is an overruling purpose in all this. Surely these English-speaking nations have a mission to discharge to the human race. Assuredly Britain and America—parent and daughter—ought to, and will yet have, a common purpose, and ought to work together in the bonds of the closest alliance for its accomplishment. Be this as it may, however, this British race, with its energy and intelligence, its political liberty, its freedom of speech and of conscience, and its earnest religious character, is fast disseminating itself throughout the habitable globe. But not to digress too widely, let us consider more closely the vast field for its and our occupation which lies beyond us.

The obscurity which enveloped Prince Rupert's Land is passing away,—the mist of ignorance is rising,—the country itself is standing forth in its true light, and appears in a very different aspect from that it wore when viewed through the coloured and distorted media of depreciation and misrepresentation. The process is going

steadily on. As some fair statue—freed from the accumulation of ages in which it lay buried, and gradually disinterred by some adventurous Layard—stands before us a vision of beauty and of rare excellence,—or, to speak more appositely, as the treasures of the hoarding miser are brought to light, and the tenacious grasp of the huge *main mort* of the Hudson's Bay Company is relaxed, so will these fair Territories stand before us and present to the attention of the human family vast expanses of rich arable country,—goodly habitations for the residence of civilized man.

Holding, then, such views, I shall consider : 1st. The extent of the Territory ; 2nd. Its features and resources ; 3rdly. The tenure or the mode of its holding by the Company : and then I shall conjecture its future ; and leave you to think over the grandeur of the British dominions on this continent, as they now are, and as they will in the process of time become.

In dealing with this comprehensive and instructive subject, I am aware of its magnitude and importance, and I feel in no light degree the difficulty of compression. I therefore remind you, that, in the course of a brief hour,

I only design to suggest topics for your after reflection and consideration.

The large portion of the American continent which we are to-night considering cannot much longer remain untenanted by civilized man. The territory comprehended, or at least claimed by the company, is a vast one. Its length is stated by Murray at about 2600 miles, and its breadth at nearly 1460 miles; though it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate, owing to the extent of its inland seas. Its area, inclusively of what is now British Columbia, was estimated by Arrowsmith at 3,060,000 square miles. This mere abstract statement does not, however, convey an adequate impression of the vast extent of the region of Hudsonia. An American writer, who assumed the territory over which the company exercise control to contain an area of 2,500,000 square miles only, presents the question to our view in the ensuing forcible terms: "How much is that? It is $15\frac{1}{2}$ times larger than the State of California, about 38 times as large as the State of New York, nearly twice as large as the whole of the 31 States of the Union, and, if we omit the Territory of Nebraska, as large as all our States and Territories combined!"

Here, then, assuredly is a princely domain, to

be kept, forsooth, as a preserve for the hunting of a company of London merchants! Shall it, can it, so continue? Surely enlightened public opinion will answer in emphatic terms that it shall not. Patriotism, and respect for the interests of the empire, alike demand the throwing open of this territory to the incursions of the emigrant; and neither the British nor the Canadian people can long stand by, and keep without the huge enclosure, fenced as it may be with care, guarded by the pains and penalties of an ancient charter, of doubtful legality, and beset with sign-boards proclaiming to all the world, "No trespassers permitted here." Assuredly, in sober truth, the time has come when the claims of humanity, and the interests of a great empire, require that all the portions of this vast territory which are adapted for settlement should be laid open to the industrious emigrant;—and more, that every effort should be made to ascertain what portions of the territory are really available for settlement. With the information we possess, we believe that there are large tracts, princely provinces in fact, that are well adapted to become the seats of busy industry; and I am utterly indisposed, as are, I believe, the people of Canada also, to accept as an accurate

representation “ of the character of the territory of the Hudson’s Bay Company, with reference to its adaptation for the purposes of colonization and cultivation,” the authoritative and positive assertion of one of the officials of the company that “ no part of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s territories is well adapted for settlement,” however true it may be of the Siberia to the north of the continent.

True, the interests of a great company require that it should be so depicted ; true, the statement is in harmony with the uniform representation of the company : but, nevertheless, we believe that looking at the territory, not from the contracted point of view of a trading company, but from the higher stand-point of Imperial and Colonial interests, we shall come, upon undoubted authority, to the moderate but positive conclusions that there are noble provinces in these territories well adapted for settlement,—provinces which will yet become important members of the New Britannic Empire which is quickly being built-up on these Northern shores.

Our means of information are fast multiplying with regard to the territory. We have ample data on which to base safe and legitimate conclusions. We have had the evidence of

travellers, of missionaries, and of servants of the company. We are now obtaining the reliable testimony of scientific exploring expeditions, prosecuting their researches from the Eastern and the Western Territories. In to-night, then, pursuing our journey westward, I design to travel in good company; and lest we should lose our way in the wilds, I will keep close to the prominently-defined trail of the Governor of Rupert's Land, Sir George Simpson, as in 1841 he wended his way on his enterprising "Overland Journey Round the World," of which we are in possession of so lively and graphic an account.

First, we shall steam up the Ottawa as far as Les Joachims; thence proceed by canoe, via the Upper Ottawa and the Matawan, to Lake Nipissing; thence, by same conveyance, down the French River to Georgian Bay (or we can go thus far, directly and speedily, by the Grand Trunk and Northern Railways); and thence by steamer, through Lake Huron and the Sault St. Mary ship-canal, to Lake Superior, and onward on that lake to Fort William, near the frontier of Minnesota. From this point we shall, in our canoe, dart merrily up the beautiful river Kaministiquia, "whose verdant banks form a striking and agreeable contrast to the ste-

rile and rugged coast of Lake Superior." Passing by the Kakabeka Falls, "inferior in volume only to Niagara, and having the advantage over it in height of fall and wildness of scenery," we shall pass through forests of elm, oak, pine, and birch, where "the river is studded with isles not less fertile than the banks, many a spot reminding us of the rich and quiet scenery of England." And as we look over this (to borrow a term from the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Territories) "perfect paradise as compared with the adamantine desert of Lake Superior," the conclusion is forced upon our minds, as it was upon that of Sir George Simpson, "that one cannot pass through this fair valley without feeling that it is destined, sooner or later, to become the happy home of civilized men, with their bleating flocks and lowing herds, their schools and their churches, their full garners and their social hearths." Toiling on our way, "crossing the height of land between Canada and the Hudson Bay Company Territories," as they claim it, and leaving behind us in a shallow pool "one of the thousand sources of the St. Lawrence," descending the River Embarras, passing through the Lake of a Thousand Lakes, over the French Portage,

over hill and valley, through morass and forest, passing through Sturgeon Lake into the Maligne, thence through Lac la Croix to the Macan, seeing, as we pass, sturgeons tethered by the Indians to stakes and waiting their doom, we make a short portage from the Macan to a stream falling into the Lac la Pluie, and thence float on to that Lake. "The river," says our authority, "which empties Lac la Pluie into the Lake of the Woods, is decidedly the finest stream on the whole route. From Fort Francis downwards, a stretch of 100 miles, it is not interrupted by a single impediment, while the current is not strong enough to materially retard an ascending traveller. When we understand, as we are informed by Prof. Hind, that the area of arable land in the Rainy River Valley exceeds 200,000 acres, while there are small detached areas on the route between the Kaministiquia and the Rainy Rivers of from 50 to 200 acres, which will be of much importance in the establishment of the line of communication from Canada, we can appreciate the statement of Sir George Simpson, that "The banks are no less favorable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling in some measure those of the Thames near Richmond. From the very bank of the river there

risers a gentle slope of green-sward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak."

We can enter most cordially into the vision that rose before him,—a vision now rapidly approaching realization,—and which he thus foreshadowed:—

"Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern, through the vista of futurity, this noble stream, connecting as it does the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steamboats on its bosom and populous towns on its borders?"

But paddling on through the Lake of the Woods, "whose shores are very fertile," and which is studded with woody islands, we reach the head of the Winnipeg, a magnificent stream which empties the Lake of the Woods into Lake Winnipeg. Here, again, apart from the cultivable areas varying from 50 to 300 acres along its course of 200 miles, we find 20,000 acres of arable land. The river is broken by falls and rapids. Passing down the river, we reach Lake Winnipeg; and at length enter on the grand traverse leading to the mouth of the Red River, and gain first the lower fort of the settlement, and then Fort Garry, 21 miles higher up the river. And so we have in a few minutes accomplished a

journey of 500 miles from Fort William, and have, I trust, derived from the adventure some information of a practical character. The route derives much present interest from the fact that it is our avenue of approach to the vast prairies of the Red River and the Saskatchewan,—our pathway to the Red River Settlement, whence we can take horse and ride on to the Rocky Mountains, “over a very fine country.” The North-West Transportation Company, which has obtained a charter from the Legislature of Canada, has been formed for the purpose of opening-up the communication ; and it is to be hoped that it may be speedily successful in rendering available this short and expeditious route through the heart of the continent to the Pacific. But for the present, simply passing through the Red River Settlement, and forbearing to glance at its eventful history, in itself an ample theme for a lecture, and reserving to an after part of the evening some account of its condition and resources, I will ask my hearers to take in imagination horse, or, if they prefer it, to stretch themselves for part of the journey, as far as Edmonton, lazily in a cart, and, with the cry of “Westward ho !” pass out upon the fertile prairies, and so attempt to gain the shores of the Pacific ; for the advantage of a beaten path, again following the route of Sir George Simpson.

On the 3rd of July 1840, then, his adventurous cavalcade defiled "through the gates of Fort Garry, into the open plains, with a horizon before them as well defined as that of the blue ocean, the scene resembling the moving of an Eastern caravan in the boundless sands of Arabia; a medley of pots, and pans, and kettles in one single vehicle, the unruly pack-horses prancing under their loads, and every cavalier armed to the teeth, assisting his steed to neigh and caper with boot and spur; the effect being not a little heightened by a brilliant sunrise, the firing of cannon, the streaming of flags, and the shouting of spectators." We are under way, then. The scenery of the first day is "a perfect level." On the east, north, and south there was not a mound or a tree to vary the vast expanse of green-sward, while to the west were the gleaming bays of the winding Assiniboine, separated from each other by wooded points of considerable depth." Next day the cavalcade "brushed the rich grass with their knees." The rankness of the vegetation savoured of the torrid zone. In the afternoon, the plains gave place to a "rolling succession of sandy hills covered with brush." Next day the journey lay through tolerably well wooded hills, with a succession of lakes. In the neighbourhood of these

waters, the pasture was rich and luxuriant. The pace now became slower, to keep with that of the loaded carts. On ascending the eastern embankment of the valley of the Assiniboia, a large band of horses was seen, the stud of Fort Ellice.

Leaving the fort, and passing through a swampy wood, and through a level meadow several thousand acres in extent, the party trotted away over prairies studded with clumps of trees, then over swampy ground, then over prairies, and past a boundless one as level and smooth as a pond and covered with an alluvial soil of great fertility. And so the pace was kept up, at the rate of 4 or 5 miles an hour, for 10, 12, or 14 hours a day. The soil for three or four days was, we are told, absolutely manured with the dung of the buffalo, so that myriads must have recently passed over the ground. And the journey went on amid a country with such characteristics as these, a picturesque country, sloping banks of green-sward crowned with thick woods, a beautiful country with lofty hills and long valleys, till the south branch of the Saskatchewan was reached. A smart ride of 4 or 5 hours from the Bow River, through a country much resembling an English park, brought the cavalcade to Fort Carlton, on the

Saskatchewan. The distance of 600 miles was accomplished in 13 days. The river is here a quarter of a mile wide, and is navigable for boats from Rocky-Mountain House to Lake Winnipeg, upwards of 700 miles in a direct line. At the Fort "there are large gardens and fields, producing abundance of potatoes and other vegetables." Next we journey on from Carlton to Edmondton, on the north bank of the Saskatchewan. The route lay at first through a hilly country; then through vast prairies, the grazing-grounds of the buffalo, a herd of 5000 having been overtaken by the party. Sir George Simpson states that buffaloes are incredibly numerous, and that in 1829 he saw 10,000 of their carcasses mired in a single ford of the Saskatchewan. As they advanced towards Edmondton, an extensive forest was passed, then a plain covered with a luxuriant crop of wild vetches. At length Edmondton was reached. Here they found a farm. The pasturage was most luxuriant, and a large dairy was maintained. Barley yielded a fair return. Wheat was, it is said, liable to be destroyed by early frost. The garden produced potatoes, turnips, and a few other hardy vegetables.

From Edmondton, the next stage of the journey was to Fort Colville, and the path lay through

“every kind of ground, thick swamps, rugged mountains, rapid rivers, tangled bush, and burning forests”; but the journey was, notwithstanding, accomplished at the rate of 40 miles a day. The weather, during the long journey of nearly 2000 miles, had been an almost unbroken spell of cloudless skies. During seven weeks the calvacade had not had one entire day’s rain, and had been blessed with genial days, light winds, and cool nights. Colville is a mile from the Columbia. The farm is remarkably productive, cattle thrive well, while the crops are abundant. Wheat weighs from 63 to 65 pounds a bushel. Maize flourishes, ripening in September. Potatoes, pease, barley, turnips, melons, and cucumbers are plentiful.

Here, then, we leave Sir George Simpson to pursue his adventurous journey “round the world,” and bring before our readers the results of their observation and of our inquiries. Thus, then, we have the practicability demonstrated of a journey of 2000 miles on horseback through the Hudson’s Bay Territories; and we obtain glimpses of the country, and also obtain many incidental facts and statements, which prove not only its adaptation for settlement, but that it is adapted to take the highest rank as a grazing-country.

A country which affords sustenance to the buffalo in such countless numbers, cannot be a sterile one. Vast stretches of prairie, carpeted with rich green-sward, present no such obstacles to the settler as do our own acres of Canadian forest; and the time cannot be distant when they will be turned to profitable account. I have adduced strong testimony as to the character of the country in question; but I feel bound, in common fairness, to state, that the weight of the evidence has been somewhat impaired by that of the same witness when before the Committee of the House of Commons, and I shall quote, therefore, other authorities as to the capabilities of the country.

Hear Sir Alexander McKenzie as to the River discharging Lac la Pluie :—

“ This is one of the finest rivers in the North-West, and runs a course west and east of 120 miles. . . . Its banks are covered with a rich soil, particularly to the north, which in many parts are clothed with fine open groves of oak, with the maple, pine, and cedar. The southern bank is not so elevated, and displays the maple, white birch, and the cedar, with the spruce, alder, and various underwood.

“ Though the soil at the fort is a stiff clay,

there is a garden, which, unassisted as it is by manure or any particular attention, is tolerably productive.”

Of the Red River District, he says: “The country on either side of that river is but partially supplied with wood, and consists of plains covered with herds of buffalo and elk, especially on the western side. On the eastern side are lakes and rivers, and the whole country is well wooded and level.” And then he says that “there is not perhaps a finer country in the world for the residence of uncivilized man than that which occupies the space between this river and Lake Superior.”

Professor Hind says: “About Rainy Lake, and thence to Rainy River and the Lake of the Woods, following from the latter place the proposed route across to Red River, the country is, I think, as well adapted for settlement as any other part of North America. The climate is good, the soil in general fertile, water-power is to be had in abundance, and in the woods there are many kinds of valuable timber.”

I shall in the proper sequence speak more fully of the Red River Country; and I think that few will hesitate to continue to believe that it is neither barren nor unproductive, but that it is well adapted to become the dwelling-place of a large

population, and that it has resources extensive enough to maintain a thriving colony, if once British freedom were established within its borders.

I shall, therefore, here group the result of recent inquiries as to the extent of the known territory, now or formerly (under some authority or other) subjected to the control of the company, but which ought to be thrown open for settlement and which is well adapted for the purpose. And, to reverse the order of our view and commence on the west, I notice, firstly,

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

With regard to this interesting possession of the Crown, which comprises 12,000 square miles and is as long as England, though not so wide, I quote the testimony of the Hon. Edward Ellice: "From all the accounts we have of it, it is a kind of England attached to America. . . . It should be the principal station of your naval force in the Pacific. It is an island in which there is every kind of timber fit for naval purposes. It has the only good harbor from San Francisco to as far north as the Russian settlement of Sitka. You have in Vancouver's Island the best harbor, fine timber in every situation, and coal enough for your whole

navy ; the climate is wholesome, very like that of England ; the coasts abound with fish of every description ;—in short, there is every advantage in the Island of Vancouver to make it one of the first colonies and best settlement of England.” Mr. Cooper, long a practical agriculturist, and a member of the Council of the Island, says of it : “ The soil is capable of producing all the crops that we grow in England, and some others which we cannot produce,—Indian corn, for instance ; but I do not think it would quite come to perfection on account of the coolness of the nights.” But he says that “ wheat ripens to perfection,” and that “ it is one of the finest wheat-growing countries in the world.” Mr. John Miles says that “ The soil of the island is very good and very rich, and the climate is, I think, superior to that of England. . . . There is every necessary in the island itself for its becoming one of the finest colonies in the world. It has wood, coal, good land, and iron. The position is good and the climate is good.” Ex-Governor Blanchard says “ that on the whole the climate is milder than that of Britain, and that the soil is fertile.”

In view of such advantages, and in view of its evident natural destiny as a great naval station, a new England, upon which will concentrate a

flourishing trade with India, China, the Indian Archipelago, and Australia, who can doubt that its rise will be rapid and its progress steady, as it is gradually developed into a wealthy and prosperous centre of trade, the smiling home of thousands of happy colonists !

We have secondly,

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

This new colony lies between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, and comprises all the territories bounded to the south by the American frontier-line of 49 degrees N. latitude ; to the east by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains ; to the north by Simpson's River and the Finlay Branch of the Peace River ; and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. It includes Queen Charlotte's Island, and the islands thereto adjacent. It is, according to the Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, 420 miles long and 300 broad. Taken from corner to corner, its greatest length is 800 miles and its greatest breadth 400 miles. Mr. Arrowsmith computes its area, including Queen Charlotte's Island, at more than 200,000 square miles. Of its two gold-bearing districts, one is on the Frazer River, now so well known, which river, flowing south from

the N. boundary, falls into the sea at the southwestern extremity of the territory, opposite the southern end of Vancouver's Island and within a few miles of the American boundary; the other is on the Thompson River, which river rises in the Rocky Mountains, and flows westward to the Frazer River, about 150 miles from the coast. It is on these rivers, and chiefly at their confluence, that the gold discoveries were originally made. Mr. Cooper is quoted by Bulwer as stating in a letter addressed to him, that "Its fisheries are most valuable; its timber the finest in the world for marine purposes. It abounds with bituminous coal, well suited for the generation of steam. From Thompson River and Colville District to the Rocky Mountains, and from the 49th parallel some 350 miles north, a more beautiful country does not exist. It is every way suitable for colonization."

Mr. Cooper stated also, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, "that the climate of the Thompson River country was one of the most beautiful in the world, and that it was capable of producing all the crops produced in England." Its winters were more severe than those of England, but much milder than those of Canada. He stated that "its winter,

being so much milder, would not bear comparison with a Canadian winter." Such, then, is the country, in which, under an enlightened policy, a provisional government has been established, with the intention of eventually according to the infant colony the rights and the duties of representative institutions; and *that* so soon as its society takes shape and form,—so soon as it arrives at a sufficient stage of advancement for their exercise.

We Canadians cannot but regard with hopeful interest the progress of this experiment. The gold-fields, though for a time steadily depreciated, are proving productive. But even should they yet become unproductive, good has been accomplished; and earnest, self-reliant men will push on to the western slope of the Rocky Mountains and build-up there on the Pacific shores a thriving British colony. When the fever of the gold excitement has passed away and fruitful fields yield-up their rich harvest, and the hum of busy industry is heard in the long desolate glades and prairies of the West, the sound statesmanlike and judicious views of the present Colonial Secretary will have ripened into fruition,—views which he forcibly expressed in the British House of Commons when he said: "Of one thing I am sure,

that though at present it is the desire of gold which attracts to this colony its eager and impetuous founders, still if it be reserved, as I hope, to add a permanent and flourishing race to the great human family, it must be, not by the gold which the digger may bring to light, but by the more gradual process of patient industry in the culture of the soil and in the exchange of commerce. It must be in the respect for the equal laws which secure to every man the power to retain what he may honestly acquire ; it must be in those social virtues by which the fierce impulse of force is tamed into habitual energy : and avarice itself, and the strife of competition, find their objects best realized by steadfast emulation and prudent thrift.”

Firmly convinced of the sound philosophy and the practical common sense contained in these weighty words of a British statesman, we British North Americans will watch the future of British Columbia and Vancouver's Island with keen interest and rising hopes, and will coincide most cordially in the feelings which influenced Bulwer, when closing the striking speech in which he had enunciated his plans for the development of the new colony : “I conclude, sir, with a humble trust, that the Divine

disposer of all human events may afford the safeguard of this blessing to an attempt to add another community of Christian freemen to those by which Great Britain confides the records of her empire, not to pyramids and obelisks, but to states and commonwealths, whose history will be written in her language."

I turn, thirdly, to

THE ATHABASKA DISTRICT,

Which comprises 50,000 square miles. "The valleys of the Peace and Athabaska Rivers occupy the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and share the Pacific climate in a high degree." Of this region Sir Alexander McKenzie says: "In the summer of 1788 a small spot was cleared at the old establishment, which is situated on a bank thirty feet above the level of the river, and was sown with turnips, carrots, and parsnips. The first grew to a large size, and the others thrived very well. An experiment was also made with potatoes and cabbage; the former of which were successful, but, for want of care, the latter failed. In the fall of 1787 Mr. Pond had formed on the bank of the Elk River as fine a kitchen-garden as I ever saw in Canada. Opposite to our present situation are beautiful meadows."

over hill and valley, through morass and forest, passing through Sturgeon Lake into the Maligne, thence through Lac la Croix to the Macan, seeing, as we pass, sturgeons tethered by the Indians to stakes and waiting their doom, we make a short portage from the Macan to a stream falling into the Lac la Pluie, and thence float on to that Lake. "The river," says our authority, "which empties Lac la Pluie into the Lake of the Woods, is decidedly the finest stream on the whole route. From Fort Francis downwards, a stretch of 100 miles, it is not interrupted by a single impediment, while the current is not strong enough to materially retard an ascending traveller. When we understand, as we are informed by Prof. Hind, that the area of arable land in the Rainy River Valley exceeds 200,000 acres, while there are small detached areas on the route between the Kaministaquoia and the Rainy Rivers of from 50 to 200 acres, which will be of much importance in the establishment of the line of communication from Canada, we can appreciate the statement of Sir George Simpson, that "The banks are no less favorable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling in some measure those of the Thames near Richmond. From the very bank of the river there

risers a gentle slope of green-sward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak."

We can enter most cordially into the vision that rose before him,—a vision now rapidly approaching realization,—and which he thus foreshadowed:—

"Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern, through the vista of futurity, this noble stream, connecting as it does the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steamboats on its bosom and populous towns on its borders?"

But paddling on through the Lake of the Woods, "whose shores are very fertile," and which is studded with woody islands, we reach the head of the Winnipeg, a magnificent stream which empties the Lake of the Woods into Lake Winnipeg. Here, again, apart from the cultivable areas varying from 50 to 300 acres along its course of 200 miles, we find 20,000 acres of arable land. The river is broken by falls and rapids. Passing down the river, we reach Lake Winnipeg; and at length enter on the grand traverse leading to the mouth of the Red River, and gain first the lower fort of the settlement, and then Fort Garry, 21 miles higher up the river. And so we have in a few minutes accomplished a

journey of 500 miles from Fort William, and have, I trust, derived from the adventure some information of a practical character. The route derives much present interest from the fact that it is our avenue of approach to the vast prairies of the Red River and the Saskatchewan,—our pathway to the Red River Settlement, whence we can take horse and ride on to the Rocky Mountains, “over a very fine country.” The North-West Transportation Company, which has obtained a charter from the Legislature of Canada, has been formed for the purpose of opening-up the communication ; and it is to be hoped that it may be speedily successful in rendering available this short and expeditious route through the heart of the continent to the Pacific. But for the present, simply passing through the Red River Settlement, and forbearing to glance at its eventful history, in itself an ample theme for a lecture, and reserving to an after part of the evening some account of its condition and resources, I will ask my hearers to take in imagination horse, or, if they prefer it, to stretch themselves for part of the journey, as far as Edmonton, lazily in a cart, and, with the cry of “Westward ho !” pass out upon the fertile prairies, and so attempt to gain the shores of the Pacific ; for the advantage of a beaten path, again following the route of Sir George Simpson.

On the 3rd of July 1840, then, his adventurous cavalcade defiled "through the gates of Fort Garry, into the open plains, with a horizon before them as well defined as that of the blue ocean, the scene resembling the moving of an Eastern caravan in the boundless sands of Arabia; a medley of pots, and pans, and kettles in one single vehicle, the unruly pack-horses prancing under their loads, and every cavalier armed to the teeth, assisting his steed to neigh and caper with boot and spur; the effect being not a little heightened by a brilliant sunrise, the firing of cannon, the streaming of flags, and the shouting of spectators." We are under way, then. The scenery of the first day is "a perfect level." On the east, north, and south there was not a mound or a tree to vary the vast expanse of green-sward, while to the west were the gleaming bays of the winding Assiniboine, separated from each other by wooded points of considerable depth." Next day the cavalcade "brushed the rich grass with their knees." The rankness of the vegetation savoured of the torrid zone. In the afternoon, the plains gave place to a "rolling succession of sandy hills covered with brush." Next day the journey lay through tolerably well wooded hills, with a succession of lakes. In the neighbourhood of these

waters, the pasture was rich and luxuriant. The pace now became slower, to keep with that of the loaded carts. On ascending the eastern embankment of the valley of the Assiniboia, a large band of horses was seen, the stud of Fort Ellice.

Leaving the fort, and passing through a swampy wood, and through a level meadow several thousand acres in extent, the party trotted away over prairies studded with clumps of trees, then over swampy ground, then over prairies, and past a boundless one as level and smooth as a pond and covered with an alluvial soil of great fertility. And so the pace was kept up, at the rate of 4 or 5 miles an hour, for 10, 12, or 14 hours a day. The soil for three or four days was, we are told, absolutely manured with the dung of the buffalo, so that myriads must have recently passed over the ground. And the journey went on amid a country with such characteristics as these, a picturesque country, sloping banks of green-sward crowned with thick woods, a beautiful country with lofty hills and long valleys, till the south branch of the Saskatchewan was reached. A smart ride of 4 or 5 hours from the Bow River, through a country much resembling an English park, brought the cavalcade to Fort Carlton, on the

Saskatchewan. The distance of 600 miles was accomplished in 13 days. The river is here a quarter of a mile wide, and is navigable for boats from Rocky-Mountain House to Lake Winnipeg, upwards of 700 miles in a direct line. At the Fort "there are large gardens and fields, producing abundance of potatoes and other vegetables." Next we journey on from Carlton to Edmondton, on the north bank of the Saskatchewan. The route lay at first through a hilly country; then through vast prairies, the grazing-grounds of the buffalo, a herd of 5000 having been overtaken by the party. Sir George Simpson states that buffaloes are incredibly numerous, and that in 1829 he saw 10,000 of their carcasses mired in a single ford of the Saskatchewan. As they advanced towards Edmondton, an extensive forest was passed, then a plain covered with a luxuriant crop of wild vetches. At length Edmondton was reached. Here they found a farm. The pasturage was most luxuriant, and a large dairy was maintained. Barley yielded a fair return. Wheat was, it is said, liable to be destroyed by early frost. The garden produced potatoes, turnips, and a few other hardy vegetables.

From Edmondton, the next stage of the journey was to Fort Colville, and the path lay through

“every kind of ground, thick swamps, rugged mountains, rapid rivers, tangled bush, and burning forests”; but the journey was, notwithstanding, accomplished at the rate of 40 miles a day. The weather, during the long journey of nearly 2000 miles, had been an almost unbroken spell of cloudless skies. During seven weeks the calvacade had not had one entire day’s rain, and had been blessed with genial days, light winds, and cool nights. Colville is a mile from the Columbia. The farm is remarkably productive, cattle thrive well, while the crops are abundant. Wheat weighs from 63 to 65 pounds a bushel. Maize flourishes, ripening in September. Potatoes, pease, barley, turnips, melons, and cucumbers are plentiful.

Here, then, we leave Sir George Simpson to pursue his adventurous journey “round the world,” and bring before our readers the results of their observation and of our inquiries. Thus, then, we have the practicability demonstrated of a journey of 2000 miles on horseback through the Hudson’s Bay Territories; and we obtain glimpses of the country, and also obtain many incidental facts and statements, which prove not only its adaptation for settlement, but that it is adapted to take the highest rank as a grazing-country.

A country which affords sustenance to the buffalo in such countless numbers, cannot be a sterile one. Vast stretches of prairie, carpeted with rich green-sward, present no such obstacles to the settler as do our own acres of Canadian forest; and the time cannot be distant when they will be turned to profitable account. I have adduced strong testimony as to the character of the country in question; but I feel bound, in common fairness, to state, that the weight of the evidence has been somewhat impaired by that of the same witness when before the Committee of the House of Commons, and I shall quote, therefore, other authorities as to the capabilities of the country.

Hear Sir Alexander McKenzie as to the River discharging Lac la Pluie :—

“ This is one of the finest rivers in the North-West, and runs a course west and east of 120 miles. . . . Its banks are covered with a rich soil, particularly to the north, which in many parts are clothed with fine open groves of oak, with the maple, pine, and cedar. The southern bank is not so elevated, and displays the maple, white birch, and the cedar, with the spruce, alder, and various underwood.

“ Though the soil at the fort is a stiff clay,

there is a garden, which, unassisted as it is by manure or any particular attention, is tolerably productive."

Of the Red River District, he says: "The country on either side of that river is but partially supplied with wood, and consists of plains covered with herds of buffalo and elk, especially on the western side. On the eastern side are lakes and rivers, and the whole country is well wooded and level." And then he says that "there is not perhaps a finer country in the world for the residence of uncivilized man than that which occupies the space between this river and Lake Superior."

Professor Hind says: "About Rainy Lake, and thence to Rainy River and the Lake of the Woods, following from the latter place the proposed route across to Red River, the country is, I think, as well adapted for settlement as any other part of North America. The climate is good, the soil in general fertile, water-power is to be had in abundance, and in the woods there are many kinds of valuable timber."

I shall in the proper sequence speak more fully of the Red River Country; and I think that few will hesitate to continue to believe that it is neither barren nor unproductive, but that it is well adapted to become the dwelling-place of a large

population, and that it has resources extensive enough to maintain a thriving colony, if once British freedom were established within its borders.

I shall, therefore, here group the result of recent inquiries as to the extent of the known territory, now or formerly (under some authority or other) subjected to the control of the company, but which ought to be thrown open for settlement and which is well adapted for the purpose. And, to reverse the order of our view and commence on the west, I notice, firstly,

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

With regard to this interesting possession of the Crown, which comprises 12,000 square miles and is as long as England, though not so wide, I quote the testimony of the Hon. Edward Ellice: "From all the accounts we have of it, it is a kind of England attached to America. . . . It should be the principal station of your naval force in the Pacific. It is an island in which there is every kind of timber fit for naval purposes. It has the only good harbor from San Francisco to as far north as the Russian settlement of Sitka. You have in Vancouver's Island the best harbor, fine timber in every situation, and coal enough for your whole

navy ; the climate is wholesome, very like that of England ; the coasts abound with fish of every description ;—in short, there is every advantage in the Island of Vancouver to make it one of the first colonies and best settlement of England.” Mr. Cooper, long a practical agriculturist, and a member of the Council of the Island, says of it : “The soil is capable of producing all the crops that we grow in England, and some others which we cannot produce,—Indian corn, for instance ; but I do not think it would quite come to perfection on account of the coolness of the nights.” But he says that “wheat ripens to perfection,” and that “it is one of the finest wheat-growing countries in the world.” Mr. John Miles says that “The soil of the island is very good and very rich, and the climate is, I think, superior to that of England. . . There is every necessary in the island itself for its becoming one of the finest colonies in the world. It has wood, coal, good land, and iron. The position is good and the climate is good.” Ex-Governor Blanchard says “that on the whole the climate is milder than that of Britain, and that the soil is fertile.”

In view of such advantages, and in view of its evident natural destiny as a great naval station, a new England, upon which will concentrate a

flourishing trade with India, China, the Indian Archipelago, and Australia, who can doubt that its rise will be rapid and its progress steady, as it is gradually developed into a wealthy and prosperous centre of trade, the smiling home of thousands of happy colonists !

We have secondly,

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

This new colony lies between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, and comprises all the territories bounded to the south by the American frontier-line of 49 degrees N. latitude ; to the east by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains ; to the north by Simpson's River and the Finlay Branch of the Peace River ; and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. It includes Queen Charlotte's Island, and the islands thereto adjacent. It is, according to the Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, 420 miles long and 300 broad. Taken from corner to corner, its greatest length is 800 miles and its greatest breadth 400 miles. Mr. Arrowsmith computes its area, including Queen Charlotte's Island, at more than 200,000 square miles. Of its two gold-bearing districts, one is on the Frazer River, now so well known, which river, flowing south from

the N. boundary, falls into the sea at the southwestern extremity of the territory, opposite the southern end of Vancouver's Island and within a few miles of the American boundary; the other is on the Thompson River, which river rises in the Rocky Mountains, and flows westward to the Frazer River, about 150 miles from the coast. It is on these rivers, and chiefly at their confluence, that the gold discoveries were originally made. Mr. Cooper is quoted by Bulwer as stating in a letter addressed to him, that "Its fisheries are most valuable; its timber the finest in the world for marine purposes. It abounds with bituminous coal, well suited for the generation of steam. From Thompson River and Colville District to the Rocky Mountains, and from the 49th parallel some 350 miles north, a more beautiful country does not exist. It is every way suitable for colonization."

Mr. Cooper stated also, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, "that the climate of the Thompson River country was one of the most beautiful in the world, and that it was capable of producing all the crops produced in England." Its winters were more severe than those of England, but much milder than those of Canada. He stated that "its winter,

being so much milder, would not bear comparison with a Canadian winter." Such, then, is the country, in which, under an enlightened policy, a provisional government has been established, with the intention of eventually according to the infant colony the rights and the duties of representative institutions; and *that* so soon as its society takes shape and form,—so soon as it arrives at a sufficient stage of advancement for their exercise.

We Canadians cannot but regard with hopeful interest the progress of this experiment. The gold-fields, though for a time steadily depreciated, are proving productive. But even should they yet become unproductive, good has been accomplished; and earnest, self-reliant men will push on to the western slope of the Rocky Mountains and build-up there on the Pacific shores a thriving British colony. When the fever of the gold excitement has passed away and fruitful fields yield-up their rich harvest, and the hum of busy industry is heard in the long desolate glades and prairies of the West, the sound statesmanlike and judicious views of the present Colonial Secretary will have ripened into fruition,—views which he forcibly expressed in the British House of Commons when he said: "Of one thing I am sure,

that though at present it is the desire of gold which attracts to this colony its eager and impetuous founders, still if it be reserved, as I hope, to add a permanent and flourishing race to the great human family, it must be, not by the gold which the digger may bring to light, but by the more gradual process of patient industry in the culture of the soil and in the exchange of commerce. It must be in the respect for the equal laws which secure to every man the power to retain what he may honestly acquire ; it must be in those social virtues by which the fierce impulse of force is tamed into habitual energy : and avarice itself, and the strife of competition, find their objects best realized by steadfast emulation and prudent thrift.”

Firmly convinced of the sound philosophy and the practical common sense contained in these weighty words of a British statesman, we British North Americans will watch the future of British Columbia and Vancouver’s Island with keen interest and rising hopes, and will coincide most cordially in the feelings which influenced Bulwer, when closing the striking speech in which he had enunciated his plans for the development of the new colony : “I conclude, sir, with a humble trust, that the Divine

disposer of all human events may afford the safeguard of this blessing to an attempt to add another community of Christian freemen to those by which Great Britain confides the records of her empire, not to pyramids and obelisks, but to states and commonwealths, whose history will be written in her language."

I turn, thirdly, to

THE ATHABASKA DISTRICT,

Which comprises 50,000 square miles. "The valleys of the Peace and Athabaska Rivers occupy the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and share the Pacific climate in a high degree." Of this region Sir Alexander McKenzie says: "In the summer of 1788 a small spot was cleared at the old establishment, which is situated on a bank thirty feet above the level of the river, and was sown with turnips, carrots, and parsnips. The first grew to a large size, and the others thrived very well. An experiment was also made with potatoes and cabbage; the former of which were successful, but, for want of care, the latter failed. In the fall of 1787 Mr. Pond had formed on the bank of the Elk River as fine a kitchen-garden as I ever saw in Canada. Opposite to our present situation are beautiful meadows."

he was “degraded from his knighthood, fined £1000, carried on horseback with his face to the tail through the streets of London, and then imprisoned for life.” Such punishments are out of date, and it is well they are so. In dealing with the destiny of a portion of the empire, the question is to be considered, not in a mere dry legal aspect, but on the high ground of public justice; and in this view, the continuance of such a monopoly is wholly indefensible. The day has gone by for its maintenance; and neither the colonists of Red River nor their stronger brethren of Canada will long consent to see trade stifled and cramped and forced out of its natural channels. But the Company have still another set of rights,—the right of exclusive trade with the Indians over what is known as the “Indian Territories.” This right is not disputed, and is at present held under the Royal License of Trade granted in accordance with the Act of Parliament 1 and 2 Geo. IV. cap. 66. This license expires during the present year.

Such, then, is the nature of the rights and claims of the Company. But before closing this branch of the subject, I cannot avoid alluding to the fierce warfare which waged

between the rival Companies of the Hudson's Bay adventurers, and the Canadian North-West Company, or rather the two Canadian Fur Companies. The fur trade was always an important one to Canada. Early, distant expeditions were prosecuted into the North-West, and the fur trade was spread as far west as the banks of the Saskatchewan. The French had a large establishment on the Kaministiquia, on the line of their communication with the interior. They had other posts on the Saskatchewan. After the conquest of Canada, the traders pushed on the trade beyond the French limits. A keen competition arose between them and the Hudson's Bay Company. At length, in 1783, the Canadian merchants formed the "North-West Company," to carry on the fur trade. In 1788, the gross amount of the company's adventure was £40,000. In eleven years it rose to triple that amount. In 1798 the concern was increased, and the shares augmented to 46. The company was enterprising and energetic. It employed 50 clerks, 71 interpreters and clerks, 1120 canoe-men, and 35 guides. This, then, was no mean rival to the Hudson Bay Company, and a long and fierce struggle ensued between them for the golden prize. The strife was waged

in Canada and it was battled in Britain. The Hudson's Bay Company urged its extreme pretensions; the North-West Company set them at naught in practice, and bearded the lion in his den, engaging Lord Brougham, Sir Arthur Pigott, and other eminent lawyers, in their cause. At length when the rights of the Company were likely to be subjected to the severe test of passing through the crucible of the law, the company shrank from the ordeal, and, after years of abuse, the lion and the lamb lay down together; and Edward Ellice and the McGillivray, who had been the leaders of the North-West Company, were suddenly transformed into manful defenders of the monopoly they had so long defied. Aaron's rod had swallowed-up all the other rods, and henceforth they should make common cause, to retain the princely domain, which it has been so long the steady policy of the company to decry and undervalue. The company were gainers by the result: they secured the aid of men of keen sagacity and shrewd judgment; they kept off "interlopers," secured a long uninterrupted reign, and obtained a license of trade over the Indian Territories, and, by and by, the occupation of Vancouver's Island, with a view to its colonization; and now again,

the battle is to be fought, but with other assailants and with another result. Already public necessities have withdrawn from their grasp a new colony,—British Columbia. There are yet others to be erected. I by no means design to run an unthinking muck against the company. I believe it to be selfish, and eager for its own aggrandizement, as companies generally are; I believe that it has, in its dealings with Russia and the States, evinced an unpatriotic spirit: but yet it may be that it was for the advancement of British interests on this continent that the territories have hitherto remained under their power,—they might otherwise have been American. It, moreover, has been well and fitly said by another: “Perhaps there is no more striking illustration of the wisdom of that Providence which presides over the management of affairs, than the fact that emigration was first led to the Eastern coast, rather than to the slopes or plains of the West. Had the latter been first occupied, it is doubtful whether the Eastern seaboard would ever have been settled. No man would have turned from the green-sward of the Pacific to the seamed slopes of the Atlantic edge. As it is, we have the energy and patience which the difficult soil of the East generates, with that

magnificent sweep of Western territory, which, had it been opened to us first, might, from its very luxuriance, have generated among those occupying it, an ignoble life of ease."

Still, the conclusion is, on the whole, irresistible, that public policy and the interests of the whole empire demand, that all those portions of the territory which are adapted for settlement should at once be withdrawn from the power of the Company, the odious existing restrictions on trade abolished, and free colonization allowed to take place therein without let or hindrance. The Red River Settlement would then rapidly develop its resources, augment its population, and become the seat of a new and powerful colony.

With reference to the Company itself, it may be that the time has come when it should be dissolved, and numbered among the things that were,—that it should gracefully imitate the example of the greater and vastly more influential East Indian Company, and yield-up its authority and control. But should it, after due reflection and for sufficient reasons, be otherwise determined, then the license to trade, and the territorial authority of the Company over any portions of the soil but those in actual occupation, should be subjected to the jurisdiction and right of restric-

tion or withdrawal of the colonial authorities of the various Provinces, or of the Supreme Council of the General Confederation, when such comes to be. The questions involved in the determination of this matter are grave and important ; the rights and the position of the Indians are to be thought-of and protected : but still the fact is obvious and indisputable, that the power of the Company, if it continue to exist, must be restrained, and subjected to colonial control ; and that moreover, the rights of colonization and trade in all the habitable territories, at least, must be free and unfettered.

This conceded, as it must be if rightly urged, the results will be startling. With two powerful colonies on the Pacific, with another or more in the region between Canada and the Rocky Mountains, with a railway and a telegraph linking the Atlantic with the Pacific and absorbing the newly-opened and fast-developing trade with China and Japan, and our inland and océan channels of trade becoming such a thoroughfare of travel and of commerce as the world never saw before, who can doubt of the reality and the accuracy of the vision which rises distinctly and clearly defined before us, as the Great Britannic

Empire of the North stands-out in all its grandeur, and in all the brilliancy of its magnificent future ! Some hard matter-of-fact thinker, some keen utilitarian, some plodding man of business, may point the finger of scorn at us and deem all this but an empty shadow,—but the fleeting fantasy of a dreamer. Be it so. Time is a worker of miracles,—ay, and of sober realities too ; and when we look east and west and north,—when we cause the goodly band of the North-men from Acadia, and Canada, and the North-West, and the Columbia, and the Britain of the Pacific, to defile before us, a noble army of hardy spirits encased in stalwart forms,—who are the masters of so vast a territory, of a heritage of such surpassing value ! and when we remember the rapid rise into the greatness of one of the powers of the earth, of the former American Colonies, and look back over their progress, who can doubt of the future of these British Provinces, or of the entire and palpable reality of that vision which rises so grandly before us of the Great British Empire of the North,—of that new English-speaking nation which will at one and no distant day people all this Northern continent,—a Russia, as has been well said, it may be, but yet an English Russia, with free

institutions, with high civilization and entire freedom of speech and thought,—with its face to the south and its back to the pole, with its right and left resting on the Atlantic and the Pacific, and with the telegraph and the iron-road connecting the two oceans !

Such is the vision which passed before Victoria, when she said to the Commons of England :

“ Her Majesty hopes that this new colony in the Pacific may be but one step in the career of steady progress by which Her Majesty’s dominions in North America may ultimately be peopled, in an unbroken chain from the Atlantic to the Pacific, by a loyal and industrious population of subjects of the British Crown.”

Such was the patriotic vision that passed before the mind of Roebuck, when, on the shores of Galway, he exclaimed : “ We lost the United Provinces of New England ; we lost them, but our good fortune enabled us to make a Northern America. Our great North American Colony stretches now from Halifax to Vancouver’s Island. Up the St. Lawrence, along the lakes, through the Saskatchewan, across the Rocky Mountains, the flag of England is predominant. The language of England goes

from Halifax to Vancouver's Island: the institutions of England will reach thence as far as habitable land goes, even to the poles, and we shall have such a dominion as the world never saw!"

Yes, such is the vision which is present to us, and to many others "to the manor born," whose all and whose destiny is here. Yes, we know, and feel, and are assured, that if the people of these British Provinces are but true to themselves, and if the people and the statesmen of Britain but act aright their part, then this dream will be realized, and that perhaps ere the men of this generation have all passed from this fleeting scene. Let us each and all, then, do our part in our respective spheres, however humble they may be, toward the accomplishment of so noble an enterprise; and meanwhile, let us most heartily send forth, with all the fervor of earnest patriotism and with all the earnestness of true leal-hearted British North Americans, the aspiration,—

"SO MOTE IT BE."





